

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended and claim 13 is added. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,851,376 to Asami et al. (Asami) when taken with U.S. Patent No. 4,486,934 to Reed and U.S. Patent No. 5,552,351 to Anderson et al. (Anderson). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Asami fails to disclose a process for producing a formed honeycomb body, the body comprising mixing, by a mixer, a raw material for forming a honeycomb body structure containing at least a ceramic raw material powder, a binder and water, to obtain a compounded mixture for forming a green body; adding a predetermined amount, to the raw material for forming the honeycomb body, a powdery material obtained by crushing, into a maximum particle diameter of 50 mm or smaller, a crushed green body having substantially same composition as the compounded mixture for forming the green body, the crushed body being obtained from a rejected product of an undried formed material, and a resulting mixture is mixed thoroughly by the mixer to obtain the compounded mixture for forming the green body; and kneading and extruding the compounded mixture for forming the green body into a honeycomb shape by a continuous extruder, to obtain the formed honeycomb body; wherein the mixer includes a hoe that rotates at a low speed and a chopper having a cross-shaped blade that rotates at a high speed, as recited in claim 1.

Contrary to the Office Action's assertion, the dried green body of Asami does not correspond to the crushed green body as recited in claim 1. As Asami describes, the starting material is a dried, unfired rejection of a cordierite composition, which is recovered during production of a cordierite ceramic article similar to the cordierite ceramic body (col. 2, lines 49-56 of Asami). Accordingly, Asami uses a dried, unfired reclaimed material and not a crushed green body having substantially the same composition as the compounded mixture

for forming the green body, as recited in claim 1. Also, Asami does not disclose that the crushed body is obtained from a rejected product of an undried form material, and a resulting mixture is mixed thoroughly by the mixer to obtain the compound mixture for forming the green body, as recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, Asami does not disclose or suggest, that the mixer includes "a hoe that rotates at a low speed and a chopper having a cross-shaped blade that rotates at a high speed," as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, Asami does not disclose each and every feature of Applicants' claimed invention as recited in claim 1 and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 is inappropriate.

Further, for the reasons discussed, Asami does not suggest the features as recited in claim 1.

Because Asami does not anticipate or suggest the features of claim 1, Asami cannot possibly anticipate or suggest the subject matter of claim 2, which depends from claim 1, for the reasons discussed with respect to claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 3-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Asami when taken with Reed and Anderson. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

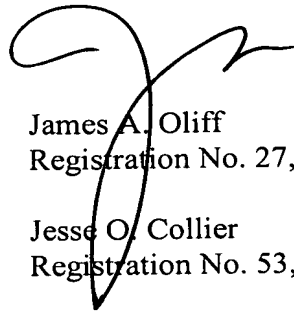
Neither Reed nor Anderson alone or in permissible combination thereof overcome the above-described deficiencies of Asami as applied to claim 1.

Accordingly, none of the applied references alone or in permissible combination thereof disclose, teach or suggest all of the features as recited in claim 1. Thus, the applied references cannot render obvious the subject matter of claims 3-10 and likewise, claim 13, which depend from claim 1, at least for the reasons discussed with respect to claim 1 as well as for the additional features recited therein. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Jesse O. Collier
Registration No. 53,839

JAO:JOC/tbm

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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